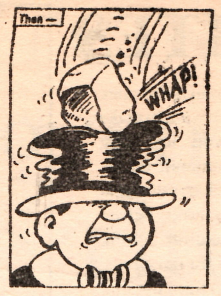
european counter network
london

contraFLOW



#17
Feb/Mar 1996
FREE

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OPEN BORDERS

EVEN FOR MICHAEL HOWARD?

Tory attacks on refugees smack of the old race card trick - Labour party silence and connivance with attacks on 'bogus' asylum seekers, and desire for a more efficient process [read quicker rejection] of asylum decisions are just a pale imitation of this. Amidst all this doom and gloom ContraFLOW spoke to a comrade from the Halkevi Centre in Stoke Newington ...

The Home Office has announced some changes to the attacks on Refugees late last year - what were they?
Very little really - the 8th of January removal of benefits date has been postponed to allow a debate in Parliament. The only real change has been a delay - so that people who apply for asylum between now and when the bill comes into effect say in February will still be able to receive Income Support etc. instead of the cut off date remaining at last October - this will help, maybe a couple of thousand people.

So was it a backdown?
No not really - the essential points discriminating against people who make in country applications for asylum - rather than applying at the port of entry - remain. And people who have their application for asylum refused will still have their income support removed - even though they are allowed to appeal, they will have no support while they do so. So just cosmetic surgery really.

A gradual decline into mass privation?
Yes - they'll still be 13,000 - 15,000 refugees over the next year destitute - the changes just delay this for the first 2,000. You'll still get these people losing all benefits - in fact we're already seeing evictions by landlords who don't understand the legal changes, or people being refused housing - and what we see is just the tip of the iceberg.

What are your plans for dealing with this humanitarian crisis? How does this link to a political response?
Locally we're involved in the initiative by the Colin Roach Centre - that's a campaign on lots of levels - demos, trade union work, pressuring the councils. For example the local NUT [Hackney Teachers Assoc] has a policy on refusing to act as immigration policemen so we've spoken to two school union groups to get that turned into further action.

We're also meeting tomorrow [26/1/96] with the Hackney Churches Refugees Support Group - who were very active in the late 80's with support for the influx of refugees from Kurdistan - to work on using churches as soup kitchens, night shelters, clothing banks. Our conservative estimate is that in 12 months time there'll be 2-3,000 people just in Hackney, in need of this absolutely necessary support.

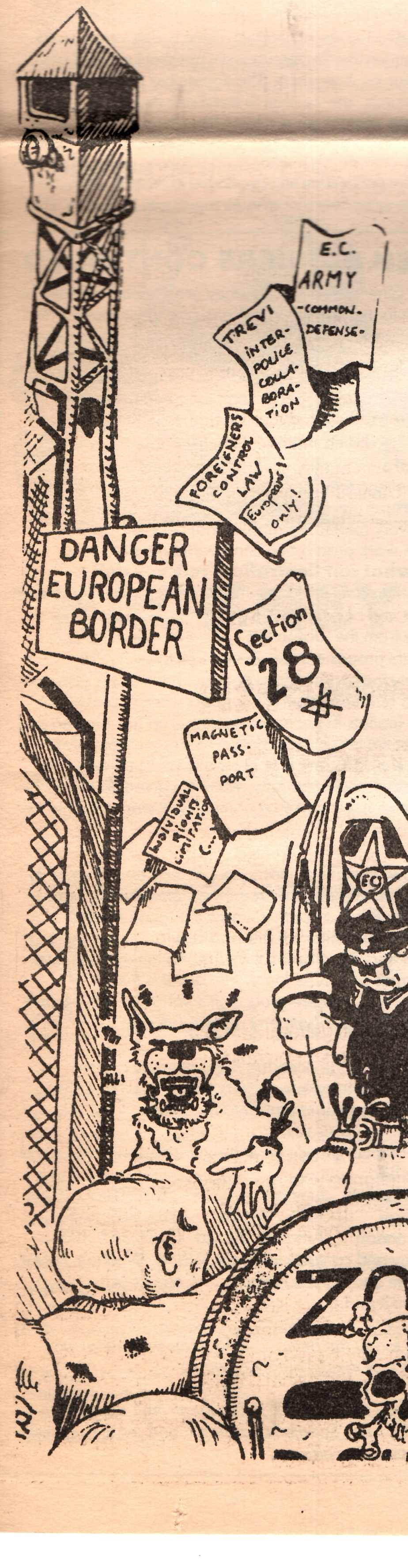
And we're trying to get the council to refuse to implement the legislation - workers refusing to implement checks, the council to continue to pay Housing benefit - as they are allowed to do - it's just that the statutory requirements [and of course the money] to do so have been removed - or provide alternative accommodation.

For example, Islington Labour group is discussing on the 9th of February quite a good motion - well it stays within the law but for example includes identifying empty council property for use as refugee shelters, providing money for children. There have been problems in Hackney, but some sort of motion has been passed [on 24/1/96] and also council officers have been attempting to co-ordinate some sort of response.

So there has been some sort of reasonable response from local labour parties?
Well, we've made attempts to work with them, and a few isolated councillors and members have made good responses. But it's also a question of implementation. I'm not sure it's going to be enough - apart from those here in 88-9 no one will be prepared for what it will be like - the seriousness of it - just the logistics of feeding, sheltering, and clothing thousands of people. So, so far there has not been an adequate response.

What can we learn from this issue - are demos enough?
Personally, to tackle this size of demo - you can't think of it as just another campaign as it's people's very existence at stake. It's got be approached on various

Continued inside



There is no such thing as an illegal immigrant, only an illegal government

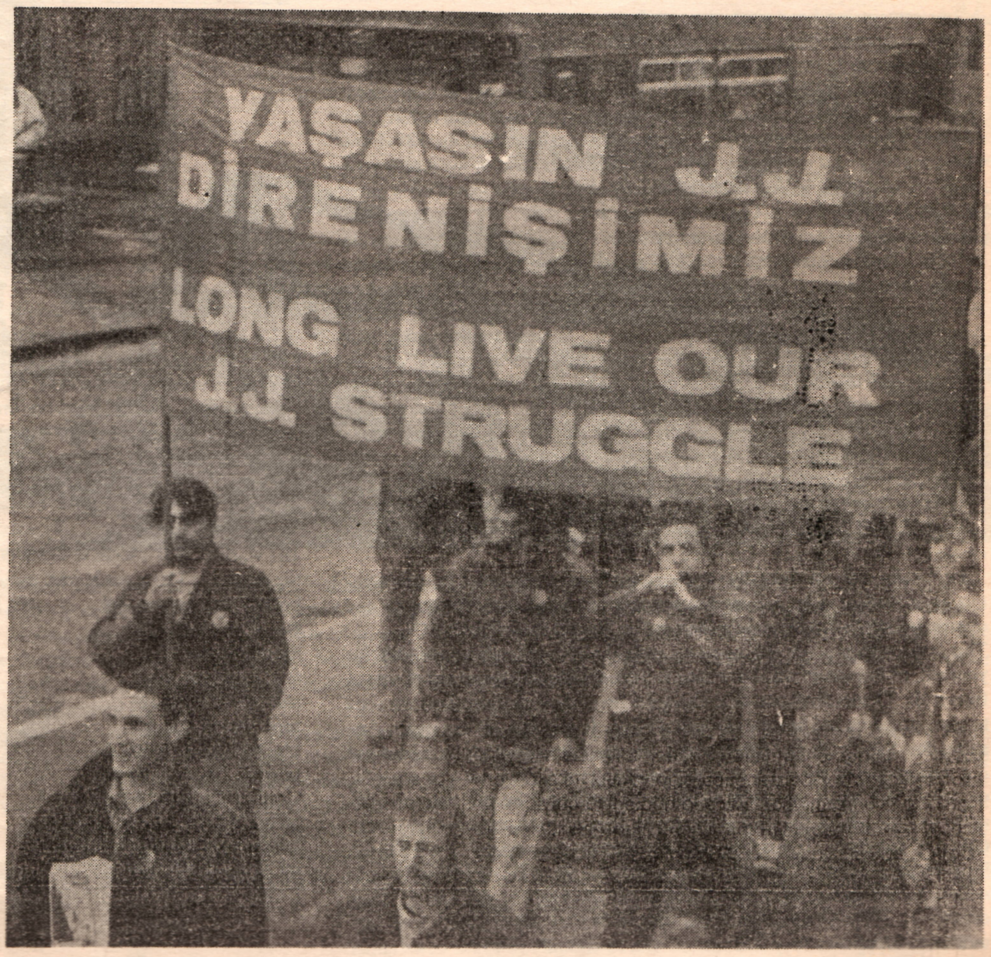
A. Sivanandan

STOP IMPRISONING ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Already up to 10,000 people are imprisoned every year under immigration legislation - half in special prison camps called 'detention centres' and half in prisons and police stations. They are locked up without even being accused of any crime, without suitable medical attention or food, access to translators or legal representation, and are subject to deportation, back to the intolerable conditions they have fled, at any moment on the decision of the Home Office. These numbers will be increased by the current changes, unless we close down the detention centres and smash these racist laws.

Contact the National Network against Detentions and Deportation c/o CARF, BM Box 8784, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: 0171 837 1450

HOMES NOT PRISONS



JJ STRIKERS FIGHT AND WIN (see inside)

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victory to the fare dodgers

The contents of a secret London Transport memo on Fare Evasion passed on to us by the fare Dodgers Liberation Front "...make pretty gloomy reading...", so says Richard Sharp, Customer Campaigns Manager.

From their own figures fare evasion has doubled over 4 months from 7% to 14%, although these are just the ones who get caught. The memo tries to claim there are two groups of faredodgers "passive evaders" (who use excuses like ticket office closed) and "diehards", but as we all know there is no such thing as a 'passive evader' - you're either a faredodger or not.

Sharp tries to blame and carefully pigeonhole the causes of this 'multiplying of fare dodgers' on things like "disinterested staff", "infrequent ticket checks", "closed ticket offices", "the absence of Penelty Fares advertising" and so on. Totally missing the point that people are pissed of at getting ripped off by London Transport, and also that it's good fun. Sharp blames the increase in "Diehard" dodgers on "publicity surrounding the Fare Dodgers Liberation Front" and on "students" so come on dolies, single parents and the elderly let's show them that we all hate them.

Write for the new issue of the Artful Dodger to:
Fare Dodgers Liberation Front, Box FDLF, 121 Railton Road, London, SE24

Revolutionaries from North America Speak in London

"People were liquidated by the state on May the 13th 1985 but no-one got convicted of murder, of mass murder, no one got convicted except Ramona Africa for survival. Because survival is a crime."

Ramona Africa is a member of the MOVE organisation, bombed in her home in Philadelphia in 1985, seeing many of her family and friends killed by the police, then imprisoned for years, now free and campaigning on behalf of MOVE and Mumia Abu Jamal.

"May the 13th 1985 was pre planned staged by the local state, and federal government with one aim in mind to wipe out Move forever, to silence Moves' voice, so that noone could ever hear that radical spirit being expressed anymore." - Mumia Abu Jamal.

Lorenzo Kom'boa was active in the 1960's civil rights movement, court martialled from the US army, joined the Black Panther Party, framed for the attempted murder of a suspected Klan leader in 1968 and fled to Cuba. In eastern Europe he became disillusioned with the supposed 'socialism' and then was kidnapped and tortured by American and German special agents. 15 years in the Yankee gulag followed - including struggle at the first control unit at Marion. While in prison Lorenzo wrote "Anarchism and the Black Revolution."

Once free, Lorenzo continued community organising in Tennessee - against the Klan, the Council and the Cops and faced yet more frame-ups. Invited to Britain by the Solidarity Federation [IWA] Lorenzo says "... now is the time to build new community based organisations to take power in our communities and deal with the seemingly insoluble social problems we are confronted with at this time."

Check out the calendar for details of these two comrades speaking tours.

A CYNIC WRITES

..... Revolution will not come from anything that Contra Flow has in its nov/dec edition. Revolution has always been violent and bloody and if we want to make revolution we have to be willing and prepared for that. Every left wing hierarchical shit wank parties organ, talks about revolution in romantic terms. They want cannon fodder like us to get killed and maimed and arrested and tortured, while they sit in their ivory towers directing everything, before stepping in at the last minute, leading us into their glorious revolution. I think anarchism is different its about us taking direct action ourselves for ourselves, but we must realise what is involved and not fool ourselves into thinking that defence of the few crumbs on the table (state benefit, health care, public transport etc.) which the rulers want to take back from us is revolution its not. Its simply self defence, its important but it is not revolution. If we want revolution we must be prepared to fight for it, you'd think that would go without saying but it doesn't. If a fight ever takes place its invariably on the rulers terms, demonstrations, pickets etc. When will we learn that we need to attack the state on our terms, using direct action in an intelligent well thought out way and when its least expected. Direct action is often taken as part of a campaign to gain publicity, but who controls the media? Its a pointless waste of time and energy. If we get nicked taking direct action, its not 'cool and macho' as many see it parading their arrests like medals on an old soldier. Its a personal failure, its a waste of time and its another victory for the state. Your headline in contra Flow nov/dec edition just about sums it up, 'Hands off our giros or we'll nick your biros'. A joke, but at whose expense, the irony of it is, that the loss of a few biros, is about as much effect as Contra Flow has on the state. We should take the initiative, organise ourselves into autonomous cells and make our propaganda by deed. Just imagine what a hundred anarchists organised in autonomous groups of no more than five people could do in this country. Everyone knows that this country is shit, our standard of living is getting worse and worse, the rulers are laughing at us 'sipping their tea marias'. Lets wipe that smile off their faces, lets put a rocket up their arses, that's a better cure for depression, anxiety and alienation than ten years of pseudo therapeutic discussion groups. You make a very good point no one ever learns from the mistakes of the past, the same old shit is churned up time after time. The problem is not the way things are done in the 'scene' but the real problem is the 'scene' itself. Underlying everything is an unwritten rule that we must try to create some kind of anarchy now in our 'scene' and then somehow this will translate into an anarchist society. This is the key to it all, it just does not work, every generation tries to create anarchy in a ghetto. I am sick of it all.

I don't believe that it is possible to create any new relationships or communities apart from society, we are just not able to escape from the day to day oppression of life that the state inflicts on us. So why cut yourself off? .... This is not a theory i've just come up with, if you don't believe me look for yourself, talk to others who have tried and become disillusioned and alienated from it all. Demonstrations are irrelevant to revolution they just allow the cops to photograph us and heard us around all day. It may kick off but more of us suffer than they do, its all on their terms. We need to concentrate on the out and out destruction of the state as a matter of urgency. We need to organise ourselves into small groups that cannot be infiltrated by the state security apparatus and take on the state on our terms. Direct action and sabotage are the only way forward. It is not our place to organise 'the people', when the shit happens people always organise themselves, we always do (poll tax, miners strike), but we are no where near that stage yet. So why don't we just organise ourselves. There's enough political rhetoric and anarchist theories already written to fill up wembley stadium...... O.k so contraFlow prints news rather than just theories, but its not exactly inspiring is it. Its as depressing as the south london press but with a smaller typeface. I suggest that you look around you, and you will find a hand full of people very close to you who want very similar things to yourself......

A. N. Other cynic.

Z replies; GET REAL

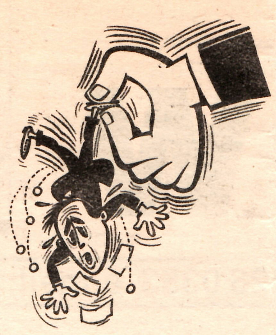
The great thing about anarchism is that by sticking together a few keywords into a formula, everything is explained. In fact all this ever says is "anarchy", "anarchy"... Say "revolution" and you think you've explained something deep. Say "smash the state" and what else is there, except to slag off everyone who isn't actually smashing the state.

Back in the real world of experience and life, "revolution" means everything from a "violent and bloody" change of rulers, to a new washing powder, to a major transformation of life in some as yet pretty undefined way. "State" means pretty much fuck all. In the real world we want to change our lives and we're not really that sure how to go about it. Some of us cover up this confusion with words like "revolution", some with cynicism, and most of us just get on with the little things that might make life a bit better till we work it out.

In the anarchist world its all been seen before because it all revolves around these words like revolution and state. Revolution hasn't happened and the state hasn't been smashed and the numerous permutations of these abstraction have been formulated ad nauseam, so its all the same innit?. The real world changes, because we have tried in practice to change things, and because the powers we have fought have responded. They have disrupted the power bases that we worked from, the assembly lines where our power to disrupt meant the power to fight over (against) time, money, control, hierarchy, and the social factory where these struggles were extended to practically every area of life. the "state" has been transformed, with the nation state being bypassed by a globalisation of money and control. Technology has been introduced to help this process, to "save" labour and increase control. We live in a new world, of new possibilities and threats. A world that is both smaller, through communication and transport, and larger because our lives can be far more affected by what happens far away.

Contraflow is not about political rhetoric and anarchist theories, or about news. It is a small part of an attempt to communicate around this new world, using these new possibilities. To communicate not just with those who think they know it all already, but those for whom changing our lives is a basic, practical, difficult, everyday need. We want to help communicate the practical experiences and ideas that make us feel the power and need we have to change this world, to help us understand the amazing diversity of needs we have developed and the barriers they come up against. Revolution (whoops, that word again) is the breaking of these barriers, the overthrow of a system that turns us into fucked-up, competing, atomised wage-slaves constrained to produce for profit instead of love, to have our needs defined by the poverty of our pay cheques. Revolution is now, it is romance as well as blood, it is about coming together to fight for what we need now, even if we know we have to fight again tomorrow till we get it right. It is about getting into (creating) situations where we might get hurt or nicked through real confrontations with ourselves, each other and the big wide world, and it is about looking inside ourselves so that we can find in more than just a handful of people the needs and desires that make the fight real.

thanks for the fiver.



Contraflow has enough money to last us another two issues - ie, by mid April we will be skint.

In fact this has been our normal state of affairs - however things are now much worse - newsprint costs have skyrocketted, maild cost a mint, the collective is smaller and even skinter than before - one of our collective members was hard hit by the effects the French General strike - etc.

Solutions are hard - but for a start we need your money - and this time we really mean it. We also need to people to put on be fits for us, cake stalls, bagel bashes - anything!. You can also get the almost complete tabloid collection of Contraflow for knockdown price of £1 at 56@ ... just remember one of Stalin's first jobs in the Bolshevik party was robbing banks and y wouldn't want us to end up like him would you?

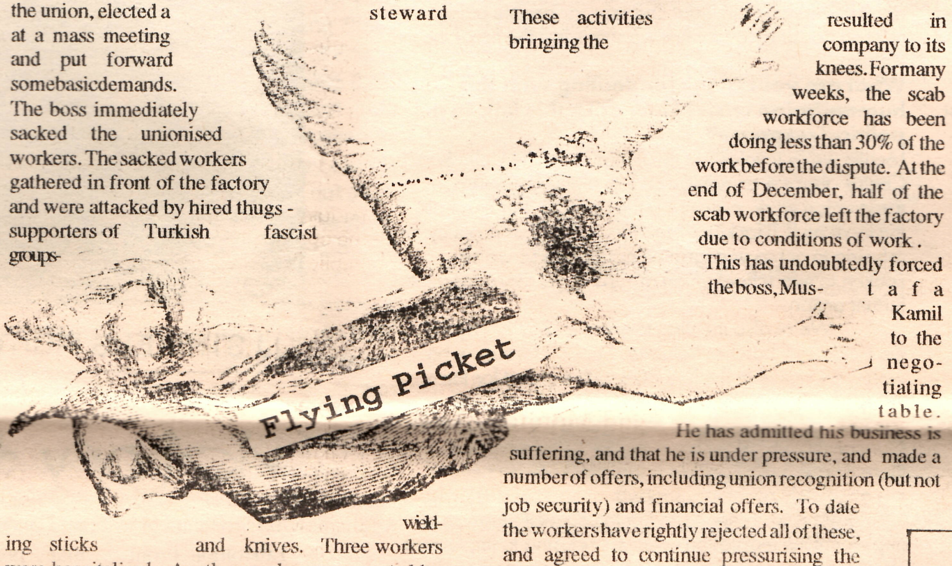
The next plea is for distribution help. The whole point of ContraFLOW is get info out, and the least efficient way to do this to mail individual copies. If you know any centres, shops etc through which we can distribute and don't already cover, or c into taking a bundle to get rid of at parties, gigs, street meetings, tube stations....... let us know.

We also always need news and dates, so tell us what you know, and if you haven't got any news, get out and make som

JJ STRIKI

On 31st October last year, 45 mainly Kurdish workers at J.J. Fast Food, a distribution Company in Tottenham, were sacked when they joined the Transport & General Workers Union (T&G). Since then a campaign for their reinstatement has united many trade unionists, community groups and political organisations in North London in a struggle that has shown that class solidarity is far from dead, but actually strong and growing.

The workers at JJ's were working 60-70 hour weeks for around ú130 a week with no overtime pay, no holiday pay and no sick pay. In the face of all this, 45 of a total of 75 workers, joined the union, elected a steward at a mass meeting and put forward some basic demands. The boss immediately sacked the unionised workers. The sacked workers gathered in front of the factory and were attacked by hired thugs - supporters of Turkish fascist groups- wielding sticks and knives. Three workers were hospitalised. Another worker was arrested by the police later in the day. The following day the sacked workers and 100 supporters were attacked by the police. Four were arrested. Six workers who originally stayed at work later joined their mates outside and joined the union. To date, not one worker has attempted to go back.



Support

The JJ Fast Food Locked Out Workers' Support Group was set up by workers and supporters at an early stage, completely independently of the Transport &General WorkersÆ Union (T&G) on the initiative of members of the Colin Roach Centre in Hackney, and the Haringey Solidarity Group. It was recognised that the Dispute would be quickly sold out by the union officials if the workers did not start organising activities without relying on the union bureaucracy. The Support Group has given consistent, unconditional support to workers in the dispute. We have always based our activities on what the workers have felt is necessary.

The sense of comradeship and common purpose has enabled people of diverse political affiliations to work together consructively: This has involved members of Militant Labour, Labour Party members, the TDKP (Revolutionary Communist Party), Day-Mer Kurdish/ Turkish Community Centre, Turkish/ Kurdish Anarchist Group 5th May, TKP-ML, Socialist Workers Party members, Haringey Solidarity Group and the Colin Roach Centre.

A regular Bulletin was produced by the Support Group in Turkish and English publicising the dispute, and distributed in hundreds.

Regular pickets of Jenny's Burgers Restaurants -who are franchised by JJ's- have been held around North East London. A campaign to get local authorities to boycott JJ products has succeeded in Harrow and Southwark Council. Legal support for workers has been organised and Tottenham Unwaged Centre is being used as a meeting place and contact address, for the workers and supporters.

The workers and members of the Support Group attended a demonstration in Liverpool in support of the sacked dockers, and read out a speech. The delegation was warmly received by the Dockers and supporters.

Also, the JJ workers, with their banner, headed the March against Race Checks and the Govemment Asylum Laws on December 16th. Again, the contingent was a strong and significant part of the Demonstration.

A Social, involving a children's Party, a public meeting, and a music event was held in December. This was highly successful, and raised the morale of many supporters, workers and their families.

The workers themselves have done much work in getting JJ goods blacked in local fast food and Kebab shops around North London and beyond.

Daily pickets were kept up for a month. These have since been established just once a week, since the industrial tribunal has started.

These activities resulted in bringing the company to its knees. For many weeks, the scab workforce has been doing less than 30% of the work before the dispute. At the end of December, half of the scab workforce left the factory due to conditions of work. This has undoubtedly forced the boss, Mustafa Kamil to the negotiating table. He has admitted his business is suffering, and that he is under pressure, and made a number of offers, including union recognition (but not job security) and financial offers. To date the workers have rightly rejected all of these, and agreed to continue pressurising the company.

The Industrial Tribunal

In contrast to this, the officials of the Transport & General Workers' Union have, from the start of the dispute, supported a strategy of working through the courts and encouraged the hope that an Industrial Tribunal will win concessions from Kamil. At one stage, workers were told by an official that the Tribunal would get them reinstated. This has had the effect that the Industrial Tribunal has drawn many of the workers away from collective activities, and undermined the economic struggle against the company. This strategy, that the union officials have encouraged, has already had a damaging effect on the organisation of the dispute.

The Role of the SWP

Despite the previously-mentioned feeling of unsectarian comradeship -spanning hard-line Turkish communists to British anarchists- there was one exception to this which must be mentioned. The SWP's role in the dispute -which amounts to sabotage- has proved embarrassing and damaging, revealing the organisation as unashamedly anti-working class, sectarian, and run at the whims of the central commitee. Larger numbers of SWP members flooded the first 2-3 meetings of the Support Group, many ordinary members not knowing what they were doing there, but simply being told to turn up and trot out long lists of the collections they had made. This effectively disrupted any real discussion of activities and prevented any real work being done. To the relief of most of us in the Support Group -workers included- they suddenly almost completely pulled out of the dispute after a few weeks of this behaviour. Unable to control and recruit from the Support Group, and frustrated that they couldn't use it as a talking shop -and that it was concerned with practical support work appears that the local leadership gave the orders pull out. It must be said that many ordinary SV members were confused and frustrated by this a proach. Many were ordered to stay away from t dispute. This was with the exception of one or tv individual members, who to varying degrees, g involved in real practical support, against the wish of their leaders. At least one member left the orga sation in disgust, during the dispute.

The Future

Workers and bosses around London and elsewhe are looking to see how this dispute will end. Th outcome of the dispute will influence other worker confidence to fight back against exploitation, ar bosses' confidence to sack and victimise workers f at least the next few years.

This dispute is being won through the actions o ordinary people, without relying on trade union bureaucrats and politicians.

Workers and supporters have increasingly made clear that we wish to continue the links we have mad after the dispute is over. There is also a clear recognition that this dispute is not just about getting justic for the JJ workers. The dispute has taught us man things, and we need to make sure that the lessons o the dispute are not lost. The Support Group ha called a meeting to discuss the lessons we have learn from working together in the Dispute, to record thes for publication and circulation to other workers, an to agree how we can work together in the future. Th

OPEN BORDERS CONTINUEI

levels. One level is demos - they are the best vehicles people to express their opinions as a mass. But it's al a question of talking to key groups [Trade Unions, the Council, the DSS workers] in a calm atmosphere and being realistic about our chances. One demo in Hackney isn't going to change the government's minc only something like the poll tax riot does that.

So being realistic - when it happens, what are we going to do about it, the stage we're at now - food and shelter from churches or the Council even if it's on a short term solutions. At the Halkevi we're also doing more work related training so that people after their 6 months work prohibition can try and get paid work.

And what can Contraflow readers do?

Supporting demos is very important - especially as say the last one before Xmas in Hackney there was almost no one from the 'british left.' Also more practically, squatters groups can come and talk to us - we're certainly looking at occupying buildings as one solutic and we need each other's support. There's a need for advice leaflets to get translated into Turkish, Kurdish a many of the languages spoken by people from Africa, but the Kurdish community has always been very resourceful and eventually, when it's given no other alternative it will turn to squatting - lets work together c this.

- *a 'flow' comment - many people may be surprised to see an interview which focuses on 'reformist' options i this mag. But in a context where the 'class struggle' movement of which we are part cannot stump up the goods "here's a thousand squats and the activists and barricades to defend them" - let alone a history of working with refugee groups - it's hardly surprising tha people will investigate any options possible.*

- another change occuring is the removal of free education from asylum seekers aged over 16 - contact your FE college union for details on this.

- a lot of local groups have been formed to work on th Asylum Bill:

Tower Hamlets - Emma - 181 590 6017 [w
Redbridge - John / Moira - 181 989 5650
South London - Amanda, Navid - 0956 365 393
Hackney and contacts for Brent, Ealing, Waltham Fore Newham and maybe more ... - Colin Roach - 181 533 7111

- don't forget the demo ... in fact remember that was only the poll tax uprising wot won it.

- *ASS (see contacts) are trying to get their updated Notes for New Squatters translated and out through all the communities affected*

MORE STRIKES...

At Hillingdon Hospital, 56 black women workers have been out on strike since October 1st, against a pay cut. The service had been contracted out to Pall Mall Services, who wanted to cut wages by 20% The workers have not hasd much support from the union but plenty from the black community.
There are mass pickets every Monday and Friday at 6pm. Pall Mall Services are part of the Sunlight group, which is owned by Davis Services.

North London Postal Workers walked out again in January after a union rep was fitted up for complaining about evasions of Health and Safety requirements. Pressure from management has been increasing massively, with full-time staff being cut by 50% and workloads ever increasing. The general disatisfaction is shown by the rapid spread of the struggle to other offices in the area. Better start sending your Christmas cards out now.

ERS

discussions will include the economics of the Fast Food Industry, the role of the police in the dispute, the role of the union bureaucracy, The specific problems faced by immigrant workers, and continuing the links-building a network of Rank and File activists and workers in struggle.

The dispute has been described as "the most important dispute in Haringey for 10 years." Many of us involved in the Support Group would go further than this. It is clear that the outcome will influence the direction of lowpaid and immigrant workers' struggles for decent pay and conditions -and more- for many years to come. Immigrant workers suffer the worst level of exploitation. Such workers must be at the forefront of the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. This dispute has shown "British" workers that workers' solidarity is alive. Disputes such as this give us a glimpse of the type of unity and strength we can achieve. It is clear that there will be many disputes such as this is the next few years. It is vital that "British" revolutionaries recognise our common links with these workers, and work closely together with them the JJ dispute has shown that this is possible.

It is intended that a pamphlet will be produced by the Support Group in the near future, giving an account of the dispute, and looking at the problems etc. in words and pictures.
For more details contact **JJ Fast Food Locked Out Workers' Support Group, c/o 72 West Green Road, Tottenham N15 5NS Tel 0181 802 9804**

STRIKE
STRIKE

The Legal Defense and Monitoring Group have suffered from flood damage, and lost their stationary, loads of stamps etc. Anyone who's got any contributions to spare should contact them c/o BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX

we're not just going to sit back while they kill us

this is the real brixton challenge

A demo was called on the 13th December last year because another black man, Wayne Douglas, got killed by the cops, this time Brixton cops. A common occurrence these days, sad to say the response that followed isn't.
The demo near the cop shop was peaceful, but people were just too pissed at Brixton cops attitude to the local black community to just go home and forget about it. There was a stand off between the cops and the demonstrators as people blocked off traffic outside the Ritzy cinema, as people were moving back down to the cop station (and the cops followed) some thirsty individuals decided to take some beer from the 7-11, soon everyone was joining in grabbing what they could (the workers quickly scarpered out the back - they're not paid enough to deal with this kind of thing, hell, they're not paid enough to turn up!) and beer was distributed on the High St. to passers-by. Looting quickly spread up the High St. and continued for about 5 hours in Effra Road, Brixton Hill, Acre Lane and Ferndale Road (some angry dolies even took out their dole frustration on the new Employment Office in Josephine Ave.) Targets were random, some good, some not so good; the new yuppie bar 'the Dog Star' on Atlantic Road (who incidently got £60 grand from Brixton Challenge) got burned and looted, as did the (lesser publicised) police-community liason office in Acre Lane which was above the (extremely publicised) black newspaper office, of course the lone motorbike cop who got beaten nearly to death (?) - a shame he only got a broken collar bone! It was good to see the media, and their surveillance tools getting attacked; peoples distrust of the media in situations like this is an encouraging sight, as was the use of mobile phones to suss out police movements - one of the reasons why so few people managed so much damage and disruption for so long.
The cops used the excuse of hearing (fictitious) gun shots to bring in (publicly) armed police, for the first time in mainland Britain.
We'd like to think that what happened was in some way revenge for Wayne Douglas' death at the hands of your 'so called' protectors, but sadly it will just mean more hassles for the black and radical community from the police, as well as ensuring that CCTV surveillance in Brixton will become even more of a reality.
Expect a crackdown soon as police are going through video footage to try and identify 'ring leaders'.

More Deaths

Meanwhile, Malcolm Kennedy is preparing his appeal against conviction for the death of Patrick Quinn. Patrick Quinn died in Hammersmith police station on Christmas Eve 1990 and the police blamed Kennedy. However there are many discrepancies, many bits of missing evidence, and Kennedy maintains that he saw the police carry out the killing. One of the police involved, Paul Giles did not give evidence due to mental problems, but is now threatening to sue Granada TV, which means presumably he is capable of giving evidence. Another, Edward Henery was fined £500 for contempt for not answering defence questions. Both have left the police force.
Pickets are held on the first Monday of every month......
At the inquest into the death of Shiji Lapitte in Hackney in November 1994, one cop admitted kicking him in the head twice, and another admitted using a neck-lock, which seems to be what caused the death. An internal enquiry decided that there should be no charges, but the coroner has now passed the files to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

What's The Real Challenge?

There are so many inner city and urban 'Challenges' and 'initiatives' invented by the government that you get to wonder what the challenge really is, to transform the area to become 'profitable' or 'pleasant' or to trick the residents in to believing that it will somehow benefit them by pacifying them with the hope of jobs, money and houses. Brixton City Challenge plc. is no different, under the auspices of making Brixton "one of the prime shopping locations south of the river." it intends to make money out of the image of Brixton as a 'vibrant, colourful community', among other things the Challenge is forcing the council (it's called a partnership) to evict squatters, to fulfil some bargain with the government about reducing their housing stock, installing around 50 new CCTV cameras, making Brixton safe to walkaroundinespeciallyfortheupwardlymobileleeches that they hope to attract, and intends to build a huge new shopping centre to expand our consumer choice (and destroy local small traders) and to pacify and exploit the poor even more by providing dead end jobs. City Challenges are nothing new, gentrification has been going on for years as a way of breaking down poor communities.

People living near the Ritzy have been fighting for years against being submerged by development. Having resisted being removed for a car park the residents association, which includes squatters and short-life tenants, are fighting to ensure that the money earmarked for their street helps make up for years of neglect, rather than being used for kicking them out to make room for more yuppies.

SINK THE BRIXTON CHALLENGE, c/o 121 Centre, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, SE24

More Development...

A campaign has been going on around another development site in South London, next to Vauxhall Bridge. A private development company want to build one million sq. feet of offices and luxury flats to house yet more yuppies and city workers. Building luxury flats is a kick in the teeth to many council tenants in the area who have to put up with poor housing conditions, at the same time it will destroy an important wildlife habitat along the Thames as well as creating more environmental, pollution, and noise problems. How many more schemes that benefit only the rich and powerful will be forced upon us?

Contact: Effra Site Campaign, c/o Tenants Corner, 46a Oval Mansions, Vauxhall St., London SE11 5SH. 0171-582-7286

HACKNEY IS STILL CHALLENGED

Hackney Council tells pirates not to get high!

As part of the Council's continuing use of injunctions as a political weapon. 2 people connected to Ragga FM have been barred from entering any building with more than 5 storeys - bit of a pity if they've friends on the top of a tower block eh?

meanwhile ...

City Challenge, CEI, SRB, ERS = more crap for the people of Hackney

Hackney has seen much of the government money thrown around in a rather limp attempt to deal with "urban problems." Beneath the surface and the glossy brochures the situation from these various schemes has actually [or is just about to] worsen[ed] for tenants.
City Challenge - £ 37 million of government money, £113 million from quangos and the council and £160 million from the private sector over the period 1993 -8 and what do you get?

* a loss of over 550 council homes [with some 1000 new housing association homes at higher rents as "compensation"]

CEI - Comprehensive Estates Initiative - £57 million [96 - 2000] gets you:

* 2000 new housing association homes which all need to be re-insulated as the insulation was so sub standard
* the need to "match" from limited council funds an amount [96-98] almost the same as the entire new repair budget for the rest of the borough.
!!

SRB - Heart of Hackney Single Regeneration Budget - £5.3 million [Housing only 96 - 2000] - a bargain not - you get

* eviction of dozens of squatted homes in London Fields
* a £650,000 new neighbourhood office for the housing bureaucrats
* the only option offered for tenants on the estates covered is privatisation [the Estate Regeneration Scheme]

ERS - dedicated contraflow readers will know this stands for the Estate Rip off Scam. The Council isn't even bothering to try to sell 18 estates [7,000 homes] - they're giving them away! When this was floated last year the "consortia" all included at least a fig leaf Housing Association. The latest list of consortia [11/95] are 30% purely private - with another third dominated by private developers.

The campaign against the ERS rumbles on many estates - the council playing a waiting game to hope that tenants give up sooner or later. There are some problems with campaigning against privatisation which are worth raising:
- how can you argue against leaving the council when the council is so absolutely crap! For example, the council is quite clearly running down the estates to try and force people to vote for privatisation. Attempts to get them to respond to repairs demands raised collectively are stonewalled.
- many leaseholders have a clear interest in supporting the privatisation [yuppification of the estate being the only way they'll ever get to sell their flats]
- many of the people campaigning against the scheme are new on estates [eg. recently given hard to let flats] and lack good connections with other local people
- there is a level of resentment against new tenants - eg refugees from Turkey and Kurdistan - as divide and rule keeps tenants from organising collectively.
- the chair of Housing - Simon Matthews - currently holds the balance of power between the pro and anti Blairites on the council - neither side is willing to piss him off - and even when the entire previous leadership got rolled over the Hackney Downs Campaign, he swapped sides at the last moment and kept his post. Scumbag!

More info from FOHTRA - 181 986 0161

"Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme" -Prisoners say stuff it!

The IEPs was introduced to British prisons November last year - it means that things that were previously rights - visits, access to money, association, home leave, contacting lawyers by phone, having more than 2 boxes of possessions and not wearing prison uniform - are now privileges to be earned and a tool to divide and rule. In addition, prisoners are now soon only to be able to call numbers approved by a computerised database.

"J" a Full Sutton striker writes: "Full Sutton [maximum security prison] ... after careful preparation [was] a testing ground for these new measures and schemes. proof of the screws' ability to conquer any retaliation...". In response, and knowing that a riot "would be playing into their hands ... a strike [was] decided upon as a peaceful demonstration against whatever grievances people had"

some 250 prisoners in 4 separate wings came out on strike on 13/11/95. This continued for 2 days. The 15/11 saw the prison management withhold the wages from one wing for the previous week's work - this was met by a cell sit in. The governor then sent in 100 members of the prison riot squad [the MUFTI squad] - up to 60 prisoners were transferred to other prisons to break the strike. 6 alleged ringleaders are now at the Group 4 run Wolds prison awaiting police charges due to 5 screws being hospitalised [sore fists?]

London ABC has produced a special edition of Taking Liberties on the Full Sutton strike, with letters from a number of the participants - copies with a SAE from ABC @ 121 Railton Rd. SE24 London or the usual infoshops. ABC like everyone else is short of cash so ... [you know what to do!]

* some more prison news - as part of cost cutting, prison kitchens are to use 30% less power - the screws deny this will lead to more cold food!

CALENDAR

If your event isn't here - let us know about it by March 25th for the April - May issue and we'll do our best to add it ...

It's FEBRUARY

and winter's still here

Thu 1 • Anniversary of June Phipp's death

Sat 3 • 10am-3pm Open Meeting for workers and supporters in the JJ Fast Food workers' dispute, th next step..... Day-Mer Community Centre, Howard Rd N16

Mon 5 • Do Politics make us miserable or do people make politics? - Discussion Group 6pm at 56@ Infoshop

Wed 7 • 7 pm - Stonehenge open campaign meeting - 99 Torriano Ave NW5

Sat 10 • 1-5 pm - "Africa - transcending the debt crisis" - with speakers from the World Bank to hurl abuse at, Kenneth Kaunda and more - £10/5 - Westminster Central Hall - info Debt Crisis Network - 171 620 4444 and • Ramona Africa speaks - 7-11 pm - Kurdish Centre, 11 Portland Gardens (Manor House tube) + entertainments

Sun 11 • noon - 2 pm - Solidarity picket with 5 irish POWS in Belmarsh prison denied contact visits for 18 months, one on dirty protest - commemoration of 20th anniv. of death of hunger striker Frank Stagg who died demanding transfer back to Ireland - Western Way SE28 - info Saoirse 181 985 8250

Thu 15 • noon - lob of Parliament for all Party peace talks in north eastern Ireland without preconditions - Irish Peace Initiative - info 171 609 1743

Sat 17 • 8 pm til later - "rythym and rhyme" benefit for Copex libel defendents [CAAT and Peace News and others for saying providing exhibitions for companies who make torture equipment is fucked - too fucking right too!] and Free Vanunu Campaign - £5/3 - West London Trade Union Club - Acton High Street and • day and time to be confirmed but London speaking tour by Lorenzo Kom'boa - confirm from 121, 56@ or 75@

Mon 19 • 7 pm - Musicians Network gathering - Community Music House, 60 Farringdon Road, EC1 - info Alex 171 701 3587 or "musicians network@pHreak.Intermedia.co.uk"

Mon 19 • Does preaching our completely 100% abosolutly correct ideas about the world works as a means of change? - Discussion Group 6pm at 56@ Infoshop

Wed 21 • time to be confirmed - lob of Parliament to mark two years since the age of consent crap vote and for equal rights for lesbians and gay men - info Outrage 171 439 2381

Thu 22 • 7.30 pm - Immigration Controls discussion - info Colin Roach centre 181 533 7111

Fri 23 • 75A squat centre's 1st birthday party - see contacts for address and opening times

Sat 24 • 11 am - Smash the Asylum Bill demo - meet Embankment - organised by just about everybody - info 0973 632 827

Thu 29 • 2 pm - Practicalities meeting re - defense and support for asylum seekers and refugees - Hackney Town Hall - info Colin Roach Centre 181 533 7111 and • 8 til late - Irish Rebel Music benefit for Saoirse - £3/2 - Victoria Tavern, Holoway Rd N7 [near tube]

Time for the ides of MARCH

Fri 1 • 8 pm - Harringey Solidarity Group meets - Salisbury Pub - Green Lanes and • 8.30 pm - Class War benefit for ABC - Double day and Underclass [both from Mancs] - Acton Arms Kingsland Rd, cnr Arbutus St - £ 3/2

Sat 2 • Groundswell meeting against the Job Seekers Alliance etc.- 75@ Mildmay Park N1 - contact local claimants group or 181 802 9804 to confirm

Sun 3 • Noon til 1 pm - Picket of Downing Street by Saoirse - info Saoirse 181 985 8250

Mon 4 • 6 -7 pm - Free Malcolm Kennedy Picket - Hammersmith copshop - info Colin Roach Centre 181 533 7111

Tues 5 • to be confirmed - justice picket for David Ewing - killed by a police officer - info Colin Roach Centre 181 533 7111

Wed 6 • 7 pm - Stonehenge open campaign meeting - 99 Torriano Ave NW5

Thu 7 • 7.30 pm - ACF Forum - "SWP -Labour's little helpers" - Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St WC1

Sat16 • *Alarm UK national Conference, Nottingham* - info 0181 983 3572

Sun 17 • 11am - St Patricks day car cavalcade for release of Irish POWs - Archway Tavern [Near tube] - transport available - info Saoirse 181 985 8250

Mon 18 • 7 pm - Musicians Network gathering - Community Music House, 60 Farringdon Road, EC1 - info Alex 171 701 3587 [and every third monday after]

Sat 23 • to be confirmed - another Smash the Asylum Bill demo - info 0973 632 827

Mon 25 - 31/3 - Week of action against sale of Hawks to Indonesia - info 171 281 0297

Thu 28 • 7.30 pm - Ireland ... discussion - info Colin Roach centre 181 533 7111

Fri 29 • 8.30 pm - Class War prisoners benefit - Scum of Toytown [+ ? Bollo] - Acton Arms Kingsland Rd, cnr Arbutus St - £ 3/2 [hey and any bands who want to play more gigs or people who want the CW prisoners leaflet write - PO Box 467 London E8 3QX

• **29-31** Selafield Womens Peace Camp - 01706 371387

Sat 30 • noon - Close Campsfield Detention Centre - meet at the gates Kiddlington Oxfordshire - info 1865 724 452

Don't be fooled this APRIL

Mon 1 • unemployment benefit abolished today - replaced by JSA and • 6 -7 pm - Free Malcolm Kennedy Picket - Hammersmith copshop - info Colin Roach centre 181 533 7111

Thu 4 • 7.30 pm - ACF Forum - "Anarchism and Religion" - Marchmont Community Centre Marchmont St WC1

Sun 7 • noon til 1pm - Picket of Downing Street by Saoirse [and 80th anniversary of Easter Uprising too!] - info Saoirse 181 985 8250

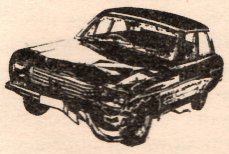
Tue 9 • anti-JSA demo 1pm Embankment - info and confirmation 181 802 9804 - called by London against the JSA - warning they call for "Jobs not JSA"

Mon 15 • 7.30 pm - "Repairs are Rights" meeting, Haggerston Community Centre, Haggerston Rd E8 - Bi-lingual [English / Turkish] advice, and campaigning against Council rundown of Estates prior to privatisation - organised by Haggerston Repairs Campaign

Thu 25 • 7.30 pm - fascism and anti fascism in North Amerikkka ... discussion - info Colin Roach Centre 181 533 7111

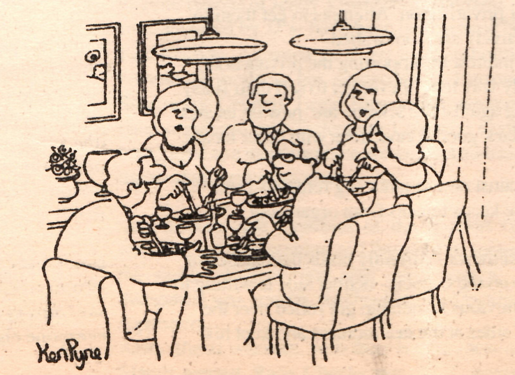
Sat 27 • noon - Close Campsfield Detention Centre - meet at the gates Kiddlington Oxfordshire - info 1865 724 452

and sometime in April - British aerospace AGM - see rich barstards and practise voice therapy - info CAAT 171 281 0297



REGULAR

- Actions against detention centres and deportations your area - info 0973 632 827 or CARF
- Climb trees and dig burrows - Newbury Bypass - contact Reclaim the Streets for London Phone Tree daily transport and more - 171 281 4621
- Bored - call the Freedom Network Action Line for a cure -171 793 7343
- Vomit - 10.30 - the McLibel case goes on - most days til summer - Court 35 Royal Courts of Justice on the Strand - info 171 713 1269
- Free - Winston Silcott Defence Campaign - still waiting for news on his appeal - info PO Box 6796 London N15 4PB
- Outrage - meets every Thursday - 7.30 pm - Central Station Bar - Wharfdale Rd. Kings X
- Last Monday every month - 7.30 pm - Job Shirkers Alliance @ 121 Centre
- **121 Centre** - **Cafe** - Monday (video), Tuesday, Thursday 7-11pm, **Bookshop** - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 6-10pm, Saturday 1-5pm…starting 4th Feb '**Brunch**' on Sundays, 11.30am with workshops, videos, discussions, talks etc…so come on down folx!
- **75a Squat Centre** - **Cafe** - Wed, Thu, Fri, Sun from 7pm, plus more, call in to find out…



"Isn't this nice? We must have these Angry Brigade reunions more often"

Basta - strike to win across Europe!

Report from the struggle by italian building workers in eastern germany last summer - faced with non payment of their wages, they struck, occupied and won. Background information includes the position of workers from eastern europe, as well as from the uk and ireland in the Berlin - Brandenberg region. Quite a lot of good stuff on unofficial strikes and sabotage - though as the writers admit they aren't sure if some bosses were shot by the mafia or by their own pissed off workers.

Available from 56@ and 121, or send 50p and a A5 SAE. Translated by London European Counter Network [hey that's us!]

Radikal times - repression and resistance in germany and in exile ...

Last year saw a series of raids across the FRG in search of the editorial group of Radikal, as well as two armed resistance groups. A number of people were held for 6 months for refusing to answer questions, and a number have been forced to go underground. This info package includes letters from those in exile, initial reports and reports of the solidarity movement.

Available from 56@ and 121 early march, translated by ECN London.

Forward on the Information Ho Chi Minh Trail

Contraflow is part of the ECN network - which beams information on radical struggles around the world. if you want your news passed on to radical groups elsewhere then send us a floppy disk [PC or Apple] in text format, or e-mail us - to receive stuff send us a SAE with a floppy disk.
We are also now receiving more and more material in German and are looking for people who wish to receive, collate and translate parts of this - drop us a line.

As the laptops chug along the trail ....

WHEN YOU'RE SICK OF LONDON YOU'RE SICK OF CAPITALISM

The Evening Standard has been organising a series of public debates about the future of London. According to their report on the first one in January;

'Sensing a growing mood of anarchy, moderator Joan Bakewell tried to intervene. "We'll never get through enough questions if people keep clapping every time the GLC is mentioned," she said.'

'...the biggest cheers of all were reserved for a plea to "give us our big red buses back". The yells of approval had barely died down when up popped another eager particapant. "Give us our bus conductors back as well." The cheering nearly brought the house down.'

While the whole thing is obviously a publicity farce, designed for balance between business and other "interest" groups, with no mention of race, gender, hospitals.... in the absence of either a real movement, or of a local state capabl of integrating dissent, the thing does seem to be turning into a pole of antagonism where real needs, submerged unde years of monetarist rule, can come into the open. Anyway, it worth a try, and its about time somebody put an end to thi GLC nostalgia (if they were around today, they'd be doin the same crap as the other lefty councils) and called fo workers' councils (or whatever).

The debates are on something like the middle Wednesday o the month at 6.30, with Transport on May 15th and Housin on July 3rd, and could be a fun night out.

Info and free tickets from 0171-332-3770

SOMEONE
ELSE'S
VERSION
OF REALITY

Interesting Publications

- **DO OR DIE #5** Voices from Earth First! packed with news views and info about people and our environment and struggles. Available for £1.50 (incl p&p, payable to Earth First) from South Downs Earth First, c/o Unemployed Centre, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 2GY
- **NOT FOR RENT** - Interviews with creative activists, the result of a couple based in Holland wandering around talking to people in squat centres etc over the summer. Looks really cool. About £5, about to be distributed more widely.
- **ONE DEAD CONSUMER** - Rants against consumerism, anti-work and more (Free/SAE) c/o 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London, SE17.
- **NIGHTMARE ON 13TH STREET** - Chronicles the recent eviction and re-occupation of squats on 13th Street NYC. (60p/SAE) Brixton Squatters Aid, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London SE24.
- **TAKING LIBERTIES** - Special free issue on Full Sutton strike - SAE and any donations to ABC, 121 Railton Road SE24
- **SCHNEWS** - c/o On The Fiddle, PO Box 2600, Brighton. Weekly anti-criminal Justice Act newsheet (SAE/donation)
- **BAD ATTITUDE** - 121 Railton Road, London, SE24 (£1/SAE) Radical womyn's paper with international perspective and great news coverage. New issue out soon!!!!!
- **THE DECADENT** - Boycott chocolate with less then 30% cocoa solids! the proletariat deserves a bloody good time, starting now. 5 stamps for 4 issues from BM Decadence, London WC1N 3XX
- **SOCIAL ANARCHISM or LIFESTYLE ANARCHISM** by Murray Bookchin - rant against lifestylers (which seems to include all those involved in personal politics, eco stuff....) with great slag of Zerzan, but he does seem to be living during the Spanish Revolution still. £5.95 from AK Press and all good bookshops.

Contacts

- **Advisory Service for Squatters**, 2 St Pauls Rd, London, N1. 0171 359 8814 Mon-Fri 2-6pm.useful practical advice, the law etc. New SQUATTERS HANDBOOK out very soon!!!!
- **121 Centre**, 121 Railton Rd, Brixton, London, SE24. 0171 274 6655. Squatted anarchist space: bookshop, meetings, parties, squatting, free info plus much more…
- **Brixton Squatters Aid**, 121 Railton Road SE24. 0171 274 6655, back on the streets after a couple of years rest. Call in when open.
- **56@ Info Shop**, 56 Crampton St, London SE17. Squatted radical bookstore and more. Open Mon,Thurs,Fri, 3-7pm. Action, books, mags, records, posters and cool reading space full of current and obscure @ mags and booklets.
- **75@ Squat Centre**, 75A Mildmay Park N1, vegan caff Wed - Sun 7pm and much much more.
- **Colin Roach Centre**, 56 Clarence Rd E5 Space uniting Hackney Trade Union Support Unit, Hackney Community Defence Campaign, and other local revos and activists. Tel 0181 533 7111
- **Direct Action Network** (London and national contact), 3 Crawley Rd, Wood Green, London N22 6AN. Tel/FAX 081 889 1361. Disability rights organisation, militant and regularly out on the street. Produce briiliant newsletter. Also have groups in most cities.
- **Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)**, BM Box 4529, London WC1N 3XX. Active again, especially amongst despatch, education and unemployed workers. Coming soon to an industry near you.
- **Haringey Solidarity Group**, PO Box 2474, London, N8 0HW. Involved in community/social struggles, produce brilliant local 'Community Action' newsletter. Planning local action against Jobseekers Allowance.
- **Lesbian Avengers**, meet every Tuesday, 7pm at the WHEEL, 4 Wild Court, London, WC1. "Non-violent direct action group committed to raising lesbian visability and fighting for our suvival and rights"
- **Isle of Lewis anti-Road Campaign**, a road is being built over a pre-historic bronze age burial chamber (the same age as the pyramids) for info contact 01343 850 225